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began to notice things, lying idly here in my bed, inert and helpless, my eye roamed about the room picking out the flaws, counting the spots on the wall, noting every little disorder and magnifying all these trivialities into keen irritations. One day, in looking at a picture across the room, doubtless to see if a new fly-speck had been added to the three I had already found, I noticed instead, that a reflection of outdoor life was taking place. I became interested. I could see clearly a cat at play with her tail, later on I noticed a chicken stalking along in the grass, for a bit of grass was reflected too. From that day on, I spent much time in looking at these little reflections of outdoor things. I never quite figured out how they could be shown in that picture glass but I did not bother my head that way.

"Finding such rest and forgetfulness of self in this little glimpse of outdoor life, I had the dressing bureau moved so that its mirror would reflect another phase of the out of doors. Sometimes, when feeling especially despondent, I have caught a glimpse of a cat or dog; I have seen a bird mirrored in the glass; I have seen a bit of blue sky or a fleecy cloud, and my despondency would disperse 'til I fell asleep, smiling at the pictures in the mirror. Then, too, I could sometimes see the arrival or departure of a carriage or people and, taking it all in all, I have had more comfort in the reflected outdoor life and sports than in anything else, since being confined to this small room.

"A rapidly growing plant is another great source of satisfaction. I had a bit of German ivy sent me in a bouquet and somehow, I think a God-given way, it sent forth little roots so that, when the bouquet was thrown away, the little ivy was put in a flower pot and placed where I could see it. For a while it did not grow much but after a time it began and the wonder of it! It was astonishing how it covered the little trellis devised for it. In the morning, waking especially weary, my dull eyes sought for my thrifty friend, the ivy, and I could nearly always see a little elongation of a branch, a new leaf started or possibly a protuberance that promised even a new branch. That little ivy plant spoke of life and health to me, of God's great goodness and His care and it taught me many precious lessons. When someone brought me a bunch of flowers, from the ivy's teachings, I thought about their growth and spent much time in conjecturing their surroundings and just how they had grown and bloomed.

"If I had a gift of fruit, oranges or bananas or any tropical fruit, I thought many times of their growth and pictured to myself their beauty, the sunny skies, the warmth and all the strange things that attended their growth and production. I thought of how many people had probably helped towards the perfection of that little gift of fruit and I really learned many things in that way. I could read a little and I have kept myself from myself in many, many ways."

The above testimony came from a woman who had been an invalid for seven years but who subsequently recovered her health and usefulness. It seems worth passing along.

*South Dakota.*

R. S. M.

#### WORK IN A SMALL TOWN

DEAR EDITOR: Sometimes the experiences of a nurse working in a small community are instructive as well as amusing. I would like to submit this little chapter of my experience while nursing in a small Western lumber camp, in the hope that some young nurse, coming from a well-equipped hospital, may realize that adaptability and versatility are not the least of the qualifications for a country nurse.

Last winter I was called to a case which proved to be an ovarian abscess, requiring an operation. I was alone with this patient, Mrs. B., her husband being away, and I had to cook and do what housework was necessary until she was taken to a hospital in a neighboring city. While with her, the doctor asked me to assist him in operating on a large mammary abscess on a patient who lived near.

I went to the house with the doctor at ten a. m. After introducing me and moving the table into the sitting-room—there were only four rooms—he said he would return in four hours. Instead, he returned in one hour and, though he appeared to wait patiently, I heard afterwards that he was displeased until he came to the realization that I had nothing to work with and was improvising, as well as cleaning, everything we were to use.

Every dish seemed to be in the dish-pan waiting for the water to heat, and the wood was wet. I found an enameled wash basin which was so coated with dirt and grease that soap and water would not remove it. I finally scoured it with ashes and put some water on in it to boil. Next I found a five-pound lard pail in which to cool some boiled water by setting it out in a snowbank. Then I prepared the table. The people were Norwegians and though the patient understood English quite well the maid did not, or else my New England accent puzzled her, for every word I said to her had to be interpreted. A round enameled pan and soup plate emerged from the dish-pan and I joyfully seized them and put them with the wash basin to boil. The doctor then gave me his instruments to be boiled also. There was no soda bi-carbonate and not enough towels so I sent the "hired girl" to borrow some. The doctor wouldn't wait for the patient to be bathed so as soon as the kettle boiled, and it was literally a case of "the watched pot," we put the patient on the table.

I gave the anaesthetic and the work was soon done. I stayed until the patient had recovered from the anaesthetic, cleaned up and promised to come again in the evening and give her a bath. I made ten visits to this patient, sometimes assisting the doctor in doing the dressings and sometimes doing it alone when he was busy elsewhere, and sometimes giving her a bath and combing her hair which was very long and thick. She was a good patient, with wonderful self-control. She never made a sound when the dressings were done and it must have been exceedingly painful.

She had a three-weeks' old baby and an older child who was always under foot and very contrary. When told to do certain things, she would not, so when they wanted her to do anything they told her not to and she immediately screamed to do it. A neighbor washed and dressed the baby and she, or the maid, fed it every time it whimpered. I gave the mother some advice in regard to feeding it regularly, when she should be able to care for it herself. The husband worked in a saw-mill. They were very comfortable when well but were poorly prepared for sickness. The "hired girl"—there were no servants in this country—was very slovenly.

When I had been with Mrs. B. about a week, the doctor sent for me one morning at five-thirty to assist in delivering a woman who had been in labor for three days. This patient was a young woman whose husband was a saloon-keeper, a remarkable man, for he did not drink and spent all his time at home reading. I gave the anaesthetic while the doctor delivered the baby, an eight-pound girl. The patient had two hemorrhages while we were putting her in order. Ergot

was given and the uterus held an hour, the doctor and I taking turns. There was no return of the hemorrhage.

Meantime my patient, Mrs. B., was alone and had had no breakfast. The doctor wished me to stay a while with Mrs. C., so Mrs. C.'s sister went to Mrs. B. with toast and coffee which was already made, to save time. About eleven a. m., I returned to my first patient but promised to go to the second to give her a douche.

The next day, Mrs. B. was taken to a hospital in a nearby town but I stayed on at her house alone, visiting Mrs. C. twice daily for two days to give douches and to catheterize. Then she decided to have me stay with her until she was well. I was with her two weeks.

The day before I went to her I visited another case, a woman who had had a miscarriage and hemorrhage. The family lived on the top of a steep hill and as there was no path broken through the snow, I went in nearly to my knees. Fortunately Mrs. B. had loaned me a pair of leggings and the weather was not cold.

These people were quite well off, had an automobile, piano and graphophone but no teakettle or drinking glasses. I had to boil water in a lard pail. I gave the patient a bath, a douche, combed her hair and changed the bed. I expected to visit her the next day but the doctor said that it was not necessary. A few days later I visited her. Relatives from the East had arrived, three grown people and four small children, making thirteen people in the house which had five rooms.

About a week later I was asked to visit her again as she had had a severe hemorrhage, from what cause the doctor could not determine, though possibly the extra people and a very cross sister-in-law may have helped to bring it on. This time she was so weak, with a pulse so rapid and irregular, that I was afraid at first to disturb her and I did not give her a bath. However, when I had been with her a couple of hours she seemed better and I bathed her face and hands and combed her hair, which had not been touched since I was with her a week before. A nurse was procured for her the next day and she made a good recovery. I never found out how or where that nurse slept, she was the fourteenth inhabitant of the five rooms.

In the meantime, Mrs. C.'s baby developed jaundice and had to be dosed with castor oil. She slept all the time and would not nurse. I had to pump the breast milk and feed her with a spoon. Anxiety over the child caused the milk to become so scanty that there was not enough and I had to give cow's milk diluted with water, for several feedings. It was wonderful to see how the mother's milk came back as the child improved and the mother's mind was relieved from worry. I left the mother and baby doing well, the mother up and able to care for the child. She had competent help and everything to do with.

The doctor assured me he could keep a nurse busy all the time and I concluded that he could, indeed. The work I did was interesting and I enjoyed it. But I realized that it would be impossible to combine twenty-four hour work with visiting, for any length of time.

P. R. I.